

REMARKS


The present application is a national phase of PCT Application No. PCT/IL00/00458, filed August 1, 2000. The application is based on the claims as originally filed in the PCT. The present amendment is made to remove multiple dependencies to reduce costs and put the application in better form for examination in the US.

Since the international application is not considered to be an earlier application, MPEP §1893.03 provides that it is not necessary to refer to the international application in an amendment to the first sentence of the specification. Nevertheless, applicant hereby amends the specification to include such a reference.

A marked-up version of the amendments is attached hereto.

An examination on the merits is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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Version with Markings to Show Changes Made

4. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 1~~any of claims 1-3~~, comprising a shield adjacent said rasp, to prevent contact of said rasp with tissue at at least some locations along said rasp.
6. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 4~~or claim 5~~, wherein said rasp is positioned between said shield and said handle, such that said rasp has an at least partially unshielded active face towards said handle.
7. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 4~~or claim 5~~, wherein the relative positions of the rasp and shield with respect to said handle are changeable by rotation of at least one of the rasp and the shield around an axis connecting said tips.
8. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 4~~any of claims 4-7~~, wherein said rasp has two narrow sides and wherein said shield protects tissue from the sides of said rasp.
9. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 4~~any of claims 4-8~~, wherein said shield is fixed relative to said tips.
10. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 4~~any of claims 4-8~~, wherein said shield is adapted to move axially with said rasp.
14. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 1~~any of claims 1-13~~, comprising at least one resting point at at least one of said extensions, which resting point is adapted to engage a vertebra.
15. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 1~~any of claims 1-14~~, wherein said rasp has a transaxial width narrow enough to fit inside a vertebral channel of a adult human.
16. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 1~~any of claims 1-14~~, wherein said rasp is less than 7 mm wide in a transaxial direction.

17. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim ~~any of claims 1-14~~, wherein said rasp is less than 5 mm wide.

18. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim ~~any of claims 1-14~~, wherein said rasp is less than 3 mm wide.

19. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim ~~any of claims 1-14~~, wherein said rasp is less than 2 mm wide.

20. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim ~~any of claims 1-14~~, wherein said rasp is thinner than 1mm.

21. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim ~~any of claims 1-20~~, wherein said rasp is thinner than 0.5 mm.

22. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim ~~any of claims 1-20~~, wherein said rasp is thinner than 0.3 mm.

23. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim ~~any of claims 1-20~~, wherein said rasp is thinner than 0.1 mm.

24. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim ~~any of claims 1-23~~, wherein said rasp is adapted to remove vertebral bone.

25. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim ~~any of claims 1-23~~, wherein said rasp is adapted to remove calcifications.

26. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim ~~any of claims 1-25~~, wherein said rasp is adapted to remove ligament tissue.

27. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim ~~any of claims 1-26~~, wherein said rasp is formed of metal.

28. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 1~~any of claims 1-26~~, wherein said rasp is formed of a bioabsorbable material.
29. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 1~~any of claims 1-28~~, wherein a plurality of rasp elements are defined on said rasp.
32. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 1~~any of claims 1-28~~, wherein a plurality of rasp elements are attached to said rasp.
33. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 1~~any of claims 1-28~~, wherein said rasp comprises a cable.
34. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 1~~any of claims 1-28~~, wherein said rasp comprises a chain.
35. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 29~~any of claims 29-32~~, wherein said rasp elements are adapted to guide removed tissue away from the tissue on which the rasp is working.
36. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 29~~any of claims 29-32~~, wherein said rasp elements are adapted to retain removed tissue.
37. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 1~~any of claims 1-36~~, comprising a source of cleaning fluid, adjacent said rasp.
38. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 1~~any of claims 1-37~~, comprising a source of vacuum, adjacent said rasp.
39. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 1~~any of claims 1-38~~, wherein said rasp has a total length selected to be substantially sufficient for a spinal stenosis removal procedure.
40. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 1~~any of claims 1-38~~, wherein said rasp has a total length of between 0.5 and 4 meters.

41. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 1 ~~any of claims 1-38~~, wherein said rasp has a total length of between 1 and 3 meters.

42. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 1 ~~any of claims 1-41~~, wherein said rasp has an active length defined by a distance between said tips.

44. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 42 ~~or claim 43~~, wherein said active length is sufficient to span between one and ten vertebra of a adult human.

45. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 42 ~~or claim 43~~, wherein said active length is sufficient to span between two and eight vertebra of a adult human.

46. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 42 ~~or claim 43~~, wherein said active length is sufficient to span between three and four vertebra of a adult human.

47. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 1 ~~any of claims 1-46~~, wherein said extensions are sufficiently long to extend from a body surface to a spinal channel of a adult human.

48. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 1 ~~any of claims 1-47~~, comprising a rasp advancer for advancing said rasp in a single direction.

49. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 1 ~~any of claims 1-47~~, comprising a rasp advancer for reciprocating said rasp.

50. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 1 ~~any of claims 1-49~~, wherein said apparatus comprises at least two parts, separable such that said first and said second extensions are in separate parts during a normal use of said apparatus.

51. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 1 ~~any of claims 1-50~~, comprising means for affixing said apparatus to a vertebra.

52. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 1 ~~any of claims 1-51~~, comprising a spring for setting a tension in said rasp.

53. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 1 ~~any of claims 1-52~~, comprising a spring for setting a surface pressure of said rasp against a working surface.

54. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 1 ~~any of claims 1-53~~, comprising a gauge for measuring a tension in said rasp.

55. (Amended) Apparatus according to claim 1 ~~any of claims 1-54~~, comprising a leader attached to one end of said rasp, which leader is adapted for inserting through a spinal channel.